Verification: FAQs

To ensure that the information provided by students and parents on the FAFSA is accurate, the U.S. Department of Education requires postsecondary institutions to verify financial and other demographic information for certain applicants. FAFSA verification helps schools accurately and fairly determine the types and amounts of federal, state, and institutional aid students receive. Verification is just another step on the path to financial aid. Don't assume you're being accused of doing anything wrong.

What is verification?

Verification is the process your school uses to confirm the accuracy of the data you reported on your FAFSA. Your school has the authority to contact you for documentation that supports income and other information you reported. Corrections are made, if necessary, and you are notified of any corrections made and the effect the changes have had on your aid eligibility.

Why was I selected?

Many students selected for verification are chosen randomly, but if the data you provided on the FAFSA was inconsistent, incomplete or estimated, you are more likely to be selected for verification.

What are they verifying? Information that might be subject to verification include:

- adjusted gross income
- taxes paid
- untaxed portions of IRA distributions and pensions
- IRA deductions and payments
- number of household members
- education credits

Not all students are asked to provide the same documents.

What do I need to do?

During verification, the college financial aid administrator may ask for copies of documentation to verify FAFSA data, such as tax transcripts/tax returns, W-2 statements and 1099 forms. Submit copies of the documents the financial aid office requests.

Now what?

If your FAFSA was selected for verification, provide the requested information as soon as possible so you don't delay financial aid decisions. Check your FAFSA Submission Summary (FSS) to make sure all requirements have been fulfilled. You should also receive a revised award notification from your school's Financial Aid Office.

What happens if I don't complete FAFSA verification process?

Your college can withhold your financial aid until you've completed the verification process. To avoid any delays in your financial aid, submit the information requested by your postsecondary school as soon as you can.

Visit **www.FAFSAfirst.org** for more information.